

AUGUST 2, 1966

CIA ENTERED HOME

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Theft

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# Jewel Theft Creates Problems for Helms

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WASHINGTON, D.C. — The theft of more than \$29,000 in jewels from the home of a high ranking officer of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) is creating major problems for CIA Director Richard Helms.

Harold V. Tofte, 55, former Mason City, Iowa, businessman, now a CIA officer, has reported to police the theft of \$29,000 in diamonds and sapphires from his home on July 28 of 24.

His wife, Marilyn, formerly of Anoka, Minn., told an insurance investigator that Mrs. Tofte's jewels were stolen during the same period that CIA security officers were in their home at 1367 Thirty Fifth Street N.W., Washington, D.C., on a security check involving CIA papers that Tofte had taken home.

"It had been taken there by me for the purpose of homework," Tofte reported to police. "This is customary for executives and senior personnel in key positions as well as employees of certain ranks and responsibilities."

TWO CIA investigators posing as a man and woman trying to rent or buy a home entered the Tofte home on July 28, while he and his wife were away. They persuaded Mrs. Charlotte Leister, mother-in-law of Tofte, to permit them to look around.

On the third floor, in

Theft

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Tofte's study, they found CIA papers.

"On Sunday, 24 July, 1966, the material in question was removed from my premises under agency (CIA) supervision," Tofte informed police. Both Mrs. Tofte and I were temporarily absent. The material was being guarded by my mother-in-law. Personnel unknown to me at the time of this writing entered my home, managed to distract the attention of my mother-in-law, and roamed the house for a period of time. No warrant or other official identification was displayed at the time."

"I found later that the CIA material, some private and personal property, and Mrs. Tofte's valuable jewelry were missing from the premises," Tofte stated.

BEFORE Tofte had returned home to learn that the CIA documents and jewelry were missing, he was contacted by CIA personnel investigators and was escorted to the CIA headquarters at Langley, Va., for extensive questioning of a group of investigators under the supervision of a "Mr. Hank Spar" who was not further identified.

"I requested to see my chief supervisor, Mr. Tracy Barnes, and later the agency's legal counsel Mr. Lawrence Houston in view of the bizarre circumstances surrounding the proceedings," Tofte told police.

Although Tofte was a \$25,000-a-year officer with a close personal relationship with Helms, Barnes, and Houston, he was unable to see Barnes or Houston for several days during which he was questioned repeatedly.

He saw Barnes on Thursday, July 28, for a brief noon meeting and was permitted to consult with Houston in the late afternoon of Friday, July 29.

TOFTE WAS reported by friends as "outraged" by the fact that the CIA had entered his home and had removed that he and his wife

matter to the police because of CIA implications.

It is reported that Tofte has learned the identity of the CIA security officers who were in his home, and has turned those names over to insurance investigators.

Tofte, born in Denmark, was a member of the Danish underground, worked with British commandos, and after a tour in the United States Army in an Office of Strategic Services obtained U.S. citizenship in 1943.

Tofte was a key figure in the planning and staging of the successful CIA operations in Guatemala. He took part in the planning and arrangements for the Bay of Pigs, but was one of those who was vocal in warning against it in the light of what he considered poor preparations and morale of Cuban refugee groups who were to take part.

TOFTE HAS been informed by his superiors that there was no evidence that he had "compromised" any of the CIA papers in his possession. However, he has been informed that having classified agency papers in his home represented a violation of agency rules that could be grounds for discharge.

Tofte has indicated he intends to fight any discharge effort, and he has also served notice that he wants "the best insurance investigators in the business" to trace down the \$20,000 in jewelry.

The \$20,000 in jewelry is reported to be a part of about \$100,000 in jewelry Mrs. Tofte owns. It is insured for \$25,000 "because that is about all she wears or has out at any one time."